



December 9, 2004

HOLIDAY TRAVEL ACCIDENT PREDICTIONS MADE

The Department of Motor Vehicle Safety (DMVS) and the Georgia State Patrol (GSP) released today the travel accident predictions for the Christmas and New Year's holiday travel periods. Both agencies offer simple tips that can mean the difference between a safe or a deadly holiday for many motorists.

For Christmas Holiday travel, it is predicted that 1,535 accidents will occur resulting in 423 injuries and 11 fatalities. The counting period covers 54 hours beginning at 6:00pm on Friday, December 24, 2004 and ends midnight Monday, December 27, 2004. Last Christmas, Georgia experienced 24 motor vehicle fatalities, 707 injuries and 2,699 accidents over a period of 102 hours.

DMVS Commissioner Jim Davis today cautioned motorists to drive safely during the holiday travel. "These last few weeks of the year give us an opportunity to spend special time with family and friends. Holidays are for celebration, and by buckling up, avoiding drinking and driving and sharing the road patiently, we can dramatically reduce the chance of being killed or injured," Davis said.

The 2004 New Year's Holiday travel prediction spans 54 hours beginning at 6:00pm on Friday, December 31, 2004 and ends midnight, Sunday, January 2, 2005. It is estimated that there will be 1,500 accidents resulting in 9 fatalities and 394 injuries during this time. Last New Year's travel covered 102 hours and resulted in 17 fatalities, 721 injuries and 2,710 accidents.

Colonel George Ellis, Commander of the GSP, encourages motorists to plan their trips carefully and be alert for impaired drivers. "This is a festive time of year, but drivers should also exercise caution while driving," he said. "When making your party plans, please include a designated driver, and let's all work to make holiday travel safe."

According to the DMVS, the highest number of fatalities for the Christmas Holiday was 36 in 1981; the lowest was five in 2002 and 1982. For the New Year's Holiday, the highest number of fatalities was 23 in 1981 and 1987; the lowest ever recorded was three in 1958.